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ABSTRACT

Among young American Indians, a radical social movement has been evolving, as has a common ideology, because historical and social conditions have unified tribes in an awareness of a common identity and a common set of problems. A key tenet of this ideology has been a challenge to the legitimacy of the social sciences. This aspect of the movement was brought to the attention of a group of applied anthropologists at a workshop on Indian education. At the workshop, militant Indians charged that the scientific knowledge of the anthropologists was not pertinent to Indians and that the motives of anthropologists have been based upon exploitation of the Indian people. The paper presented 2 models for interaction between anthropologists and their subjects which were implied in the responses to a questionnaire sent to the anthropologists involved in the workshop. The respondents preferred the first model, which is based upon a professional/client relationship. In this model, the anthropologist's role is to apply his knowledge and skill in the research of social problems as defined by a community, and his goal is to provide solutions for these problems. As applied anthropology is now known, the problems investigated are usually defined by an innovative organization committed to the goals of modernization, development, and modification of human behavior. However, it is apparent that some anthropological research projects have fostered misunderstanding. The episode at the workshop pointed out that anthropology has frequently promised more than it has been able to deliver. (FF)

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IDEOLOGY OF AN AMERICAN INDIAN SOCIAL MOVEMENT AND THE REVOLT AGAINST ANTHROPOLOGISTS*

by Marilyn J. Henning

Among young American Indians a radical social movement has been evolving. While the structure of the movement is still loose, its participants have acquired a common name --militants-- and they are in the process of developing a common ideology. This ideology is a phenomenon of collective thinking arising out of the historical and social conditions of the groups. These conditions have served to unify a diverse set of tribes toward a general pan-Indian "consciousness"; for American Indians are becoming conscious of a common identity and a common set of problems.

A key tenet of this ideology is a challenge to the legitimacy --or moral authority-- of the social sciences. This tenet appears to protect personal integrity and native knowledge by shielding the group from overwhelming outside socio-cultural influences. This aspect of the movement was recently brought to the attention of a group of applied anthropologists convened for the purpose of holding a Workshop on Indian Education. Near the close of the Workshop a few militant Indian youths came to make their views

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known. In essence, they charged that the scientific knowledge of anthropologists is not pertinent to American Indians and that the motives of the anthropologists to attend such meetings as this one were based upon exploitation of Indian people concealed behind a mask of concern for them.

In recognition of the wide gap of understanding between the anthropologists and the Indian youths the Workshop chairman issued an invitation to the young challengers to explain how we can better help them. The invitation was declined by one Indian youth who answered saying:

> I get tired of doing this sort of thing. My mother only had a 6th grade education and she can fill most of the positions that you all fill here. We don't have the problem it's you people who have the problem. I don't want to get sucked into getting up there in front to tell you people what you can do to help.

However, upon the insistence of Workshop participants this young man did try to explain further his reasons for coming. He felt the anthropologists were there because they had been paid to attend, and that their interests in American Indians rested upon this financial consideration. He did not believe anthropologists would do anything in this Workshop that would positively affect education for American Indians. He explained that what any group of white people or non-Indians could do for Indians is to provide them with the opportunity to control their own lives. The young man recognized that the key to this

control lies with accessibility to economic and political power.

> "We only need power," he said, "Just get us the power. Commissioner Bruce does not have power....Loesch has the power, and he's a white man. We only need the money and the power, and for you to stay away from us. If you want to help, you can give that to us."

One of the goals of the Workshop had been to discuss local control of American Indian education. Anthropologists attempted to co-opt the young Indians into identifying with the goals of the Workshop; but the attempt failed. The young challengers recognized that identification with these goals would preclude effective organization and opposition. They were not exploring ways to bring about rapproachment with anthropologists; rather their demands for social change require a rejection of present relationships with them.

The interaction just described and subsequent events became the focus of a questionnaire I later sent to participants in the anthropological meeting. I wished to discover how anthropologists had reacted to the statements of the young American Indians, what implications, if any, this episode suggests for future research with American Indians, and finally, what opinions the respondents have concerning the proper relationships with American Indian subjects.

Today, I will discuss the two models for interaction between anthropologists and their subjects that were variously implied by the respondents. Each model makes its own assumptions about the nature and goals of social science. The first of these, and the most commonly suggested, was a model of interaction that appears to be based upon a professional/client relationship.

In keeping with this model the anthropologist assumes a role that can be characterized as a super-technician. The nature of science for the anthropologist in this role is to apply his knowledge and skill in the research of social problems as they are defined by a community. The goal is to provide solutions for these problems. Some respondents contended that all future research with regard to American Indians should be restricted to this model. Others, while favoring the model, admitted there are social and cultural problems within the domain of social science that transcends those defined by a community; but these transcending problems should only be investigated in conjunction with community defined problems.

The second model, less frequently implied, was that of the scientist/subject. The role of the anthropologist with this model is to define the problems for research; problems which may or may not be relevant to social problems as understood by the community. The nature of science as implied in this model is to discover general laws of human social and cultural behavior. Research results may have either long term or immediate objectives.

My questionnaire results indicate there is presently much confusion within anthropological circles concerning an appropriate model to guide interpersonal relationships for research. In perusing social scientific literature it is obvious this confusion is not limited to anthropologists but includes social scientists in general. While the respondents tended to favor applied type

of research there was considerable variation in opinion as to how this research should proceed in relation to subjects. The preference for the professional client model seemed to be based upon the assumption that relationships with persons who become subjects for research are breaking down because anthropologists have been attending to scientific problems to the exclusion of social needs as understood and defined by a community. Additionally, the logic of this model derived from the belief that its use will obviate ethical problems anthropologists have encountered when developing interpersonal relations for research purposes. Encouraging and developing interpersonal bonds for social, economic or political reasons rarely raises ethical questions; but encouraging and developing interpersonal bonds for understanding human socio-cultural behavior has raised such questions. Anthropologists are examining more deeply than ever before their responsibility and accountability to individuals and communities where research is conducted. On my questionnaire fifty-nine per cent (59%) of the respondents indicated they felt anthropological contributions to general theory and past methods of repaying subjects for their cooperation in research projects have not been sufficient.

In as much as there appears to be a large number of anthropologists and at least some American Indians who are dissatisfied with present research relations between them, it

is appropritate to consider here the relevance of the professional/client model for anthropology. There is a strong trend to make more direct and immediate application of scientific observations and insights for the solution of critical social problems as the questionnaire responses indicate. I question, however, if applied anthropological research can be logically based upon the professional/client model of interaction.

In the usual professional/client relationship a client seeks out the professional's expert opinion, advice, or service on a particular matter. The relationship becomes a social contract between these two parties initiated by the client. The professional delivers a desired service to the client in terms of this contract. The client has the opportunity to dissolve the contract whenever he wishes to do so. Aside from delivering a service to the client the professional may use this relationship to gather data for research if he so desires.

The relationship between the anthropologist and his subjects is reversed from that just described. Although the anthropologist may elicit opinions from the people as to the kind of research they think would be most useful, it is the anthropologist who ordinarilly initiates the relationship. The contract to fund the research is nearly always made with an outside agency. While subjects may refuse to cooperate at any time during the research process the anthropologist still has contractual obligations to

fulfill with this outside agency. The anthropologist usually makes agreements with specific individuals in the community to supply data, but these agreements are informal as opposed to the more formal arrangements made in the professional/client relationship. Some respondents pointed out that in the process of conducting research the anthropologist may become aware of problems within the community for which his technical skill and knowledge has relevance. He may be asked to participate in the solution of these problems and, thereby, engage in a relationship with the community that is mutually beneficial. This service to the community is based upon the interests, ability, and a moral sense of responsibility on the part of the anthropologist and not upon a formal social contract initiated by the community. Technically, the relationship between the anthropologist and individuals within a community selected for research does not fit the model of the professional/client as that model has been analyzed.

As applied anthropology is now known, the problems investigated are usually defined by an innovating organization committed to goals of modernization, development, and modification of human behavior. Members of a community in which applied research is conducted may be highly motivated to cooperate; but only infrequently do they also initiate the research. Conclusions and recommendations made by the applied anthropologist may or may not be acted upon. The decision for the implementation of these recommendations again rests with the innovating organization.

The conceptual framework and research methodology used by the

applied anthropologist does not differ in kind from those of the pure or theoretically oriented anthropologist (Foster 1969). Both kinds of social scientists have been trained and prepared in the same way. The difference between them lies in the immediacy to which the objectives and goals of the research are to be applied. Where applied anthropologists deal with research problems with relatively immediate goals, the theoretical anthropologists are concerned with research problems that ordinarilly have more long term objectives. Whether or not the anthropologist attends to practical problems with immediate objectives, the relationship developed for research purposes must logically be based upon that of the scientist/subject.

Some respondents asked for a new type of applied anthropology; one that is not simply "applied" as has been just described. It is no longer enough, these individuals say, for anthropologists to observe, analyze, clarify, advise, and report on socio-cultural conditions; they must also become directly involved in the processes of social change which requires a politically active body. It was not always clear how anthropologists should develop this political thrust in their research; but it appears there were at least two approaches. In the one, the anthropologist simply becomes an advocate for the political aims and goals of the community in which he does research. There is the problem of determining which organization or group best represents the interests of the whole community. In my short experience I can

see this is not an easy matter to determine. Even if a community should be united according to interests and aims, it is almost inconceivable they are also united concerning how these interests can best be realized. Other respondents suggested we should support any and all organized efforts of communities, especially Indian communities, to plan for their own social future, even if these movements, in our judgment, are not in the best interests of the community. If the goals of both approaches is to clear the way for better relations with members of communities in which we do research it appears neither approach can strengthen these relationships. In the latter case it is quite unlikely a respectful relationship will develop if an outsider supports movements with an ideological component that is not totally supported by its own adherents. For example, several of the American Indian students who came to the Workshop on Indian Education, described earlier in this paper, are university students. While there is a definite anti-intellectual aspect in the ideology of the militant pan-Indian movement not all its members or partisans accept this tenet of the ideology. They came to the Workshop because they want non-Indians to stop getting money to study them. The money would be better spent if it is simply given directly to the Indians for the very problems that are being studied, they believe. They did not ask for support of their movement, which is what they received. Some anthropologists

felt that only a show of support for the movement would ensure longer lasting friendships with American Indians. Karl Mannheim noted in Ideology and Utopia:

> The voluntary decision to join in the political struggles of a certain class (read ethnic group) (does) indeed unite them with a particular class during the struggle, but it (does) not free them from the distrust of the original members of that class (1936:158).

To assume that advocacy for the objectives and political goals of a group within a community will promote relationships that are desirable from the point of view of the scientist and will ensure future relationships of the same quality can not be substantiated. Distrust in any one community may have arisen directly from past experiences with blatant exploitation by an anthropologist. However, distrust more precisely arises from the fundamental basis which separates one tribe from another, one social class from another, or one ethnic group from another, and that is the Weltanschauung in which members of each group participate. Most anthropologists do develop an appreciation and respect for the world view in which members of "their" community participate; but respect and appreciation are quite different from direct and immediate participation. One is still the outsider. An outsider who supports any and all movements within the community can only generate further cynicism and disillusement with social science in general. Respect for anthropology and the social sciences can only be developed and maintained if

advocacy and political activism are based upon the thoughtful and careful deliberation of the total situation.

If anthropologists do become politically active in behalf of certain groups within a community, the political additive to the research situation still does not merit a professional/client model. Political activism is dependent upon the convictions of the anthropologist. Nothing has changed the research situation.

In conclusion, it seems to me that problems with research subjects and with American Indian people in particular may be developing because we have too often attempted to model our relationships to American Indian subjects on that of the professional/client. The pressure to make all social science directly applicable to the plethora of social problems of the contemporary period has made this model of interaction attractive to concerned social scientists who genuinely desire to achieve results which are of indispensable significance for the whole social process. It is highly tempting in applied anthropological research to over emphasize the immediate returns which we hope will accrue to the members of the community. For example, one sophisticated American Indian woman who spends considerable time working for Indian people stated:

> We are always getting approached by some fellow who says that he is going to do research and that this research will do all these things for us. We think, 'oh, we're going to get all this money. This guy is a good guy.' And then we wait and wait and nothing happens.

> The people don't get any money. And then we find out the money is already spent, and we didn't even know it.

It is apparent that applied anthropological research projects have, in some cases, fostered a great deal of misunderstanding. The episode at the Workshop on American Indian education clearly points out that applied anthropology has frequently promised more than it has been able to deliver. The disillusement that has followed towards anthropologists and social science in general is a manifestation of that misunderstanding. The suggestion that anthropologists become more involved in the implementation of research recommendations, I think, is a good one. However, implementation does involve management and political activism both of which require other technical skills and knowledge from that of social science, itself.

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